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## Vietato Vietare: Controcultura in Italia 1968-1977

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- <sup>1</sup> The catalogue for the exhibition *Vietato Vietare: Contro Cultura in Italia 1968-1977*, held at the Musei Civici di Cagliari, Sardinia (November 2018-March 2019), bears testament to the rich array of printed materials which were on display in this show, curated by Melania Gazzotti. Drawn mostly from the collection of Enzo Longo, these included magazines, books, comics, fanzines, posters and pamphlets, which together cover a vast range of topics, all produced by the different movements that made up the counterculture that emerged in Italy in the wake of the events of 1968. Viewed from the digital age of the present day, these independent publications, often printed by hand and distributed on the street or at festivals, are marked by their close political engagement, one which permeated Italian society during this complex period of conflict, the so-called “Years of Lead”. Presented in chronological order, the range of publications contained in this catalogue track the changes in style and content as the years progressed: from the hippy aesthetic of psychedelia and the utopian ideals for an alternative society which emerged out of the 1968 protests, to the darker and more violent themes of the militant Left and the anarchist tendencies which culminated in the movement of 1977, the chosen end date for this exhibition. Informative and insightful essays which follow the different histories of this myriad array of publications are included, written by expert art historians and curators: Luca Falciola, Melania Gazzotti, Kevin Repp, Duccio Dogheria, Michele Mordente, and Claudia Salaris. There is also a lively biographical account written by the artist Pablo Echaurren on his experiences of the events of 1977 as a member of the so-called Metropolitan Indians, the creative wing of the Autonomia movement. Key magazines such as *Re Nudo* (1970-1980), established by Andrea Valcarengi in Milan as an alternative outlet for those abandoned by the hardcore Left, are given focused attention in essays by K. Repp and M. Gazzotti (“*Re Nudo* and the Making of the Italian Proletariato Giovanile”, p. 50-54 and “The ‘paper’ revolution. Reviews seen as a tool for the dissemination of the counterculture”, p. 26-33). In her broader overview of these magazines, M. Gazzotti considers other historical conditions which gave rise to their proliferation, such as

technological developments in cheap printing, and she points out that their short lives were mostly inevitable, given their meagre budgets and often amateur management. Other highlights include D. Dogheria's analysis of the many alternative living manuals which emerged, and their possible identification within a legacy of Futurism ("Diy—Do It Yourself. Alternative manuals in 1970s Italy", p.60-67); as well as M. Mordente's survey of the period's underground comics, including the outré *Puzz* (1971-1975) which aimed for deliberate obfuscation to promote its ultra-radical negationist criticism. However, it is the vastly diverse array of publications covered, many rarely seen, which makes this catalogue an important resource for all who are interested in this fascinating period of Italian history.